

BIRD KEEPER'S GUIDE

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KEEPING AND BREEDING

NARCISSUS AND GOLDFINCH AND LINNET MULES,
AND ALL OTHER SONG BIRDS.

AS WELL AS

RECIPE

THE CAUSE AND CURE OF THOSE DISEASES
TO WHICH THEY ARE LIABLE,

IN WHICH

IS SHOWN WHY SO MANY BIRDS ARE FOUND DEAD IN CAGES,
AND WHY SO MANY YOUNG BIRDS ARE DESTROYED
IN THE BREEDING SEASON;

WITH THE

MEANS OF PREVENTION,

A NEW METHOD OF TEACHING BIRDS
TO SING TUNES.

FOR MAKING BIRDS SING

AND SINGING BIRDS

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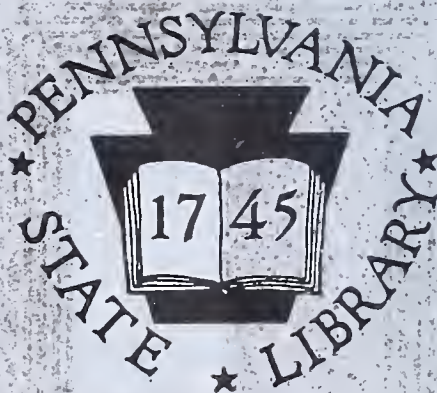
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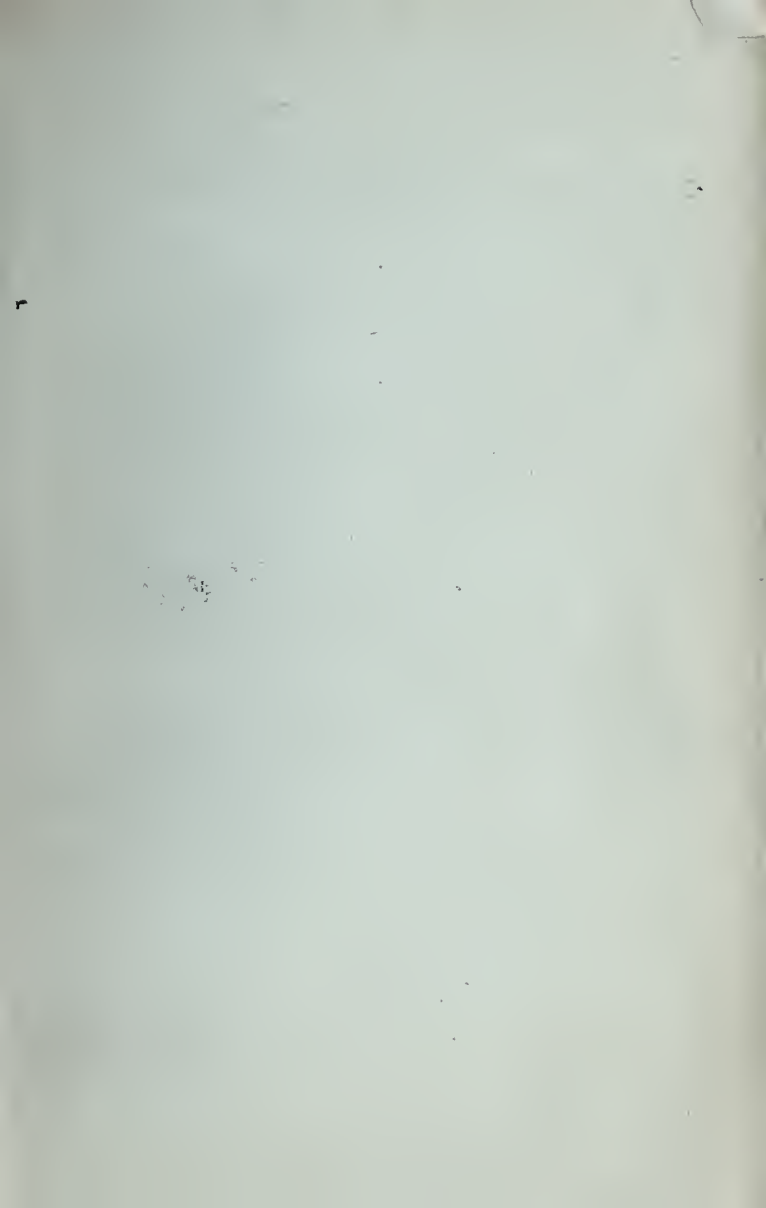
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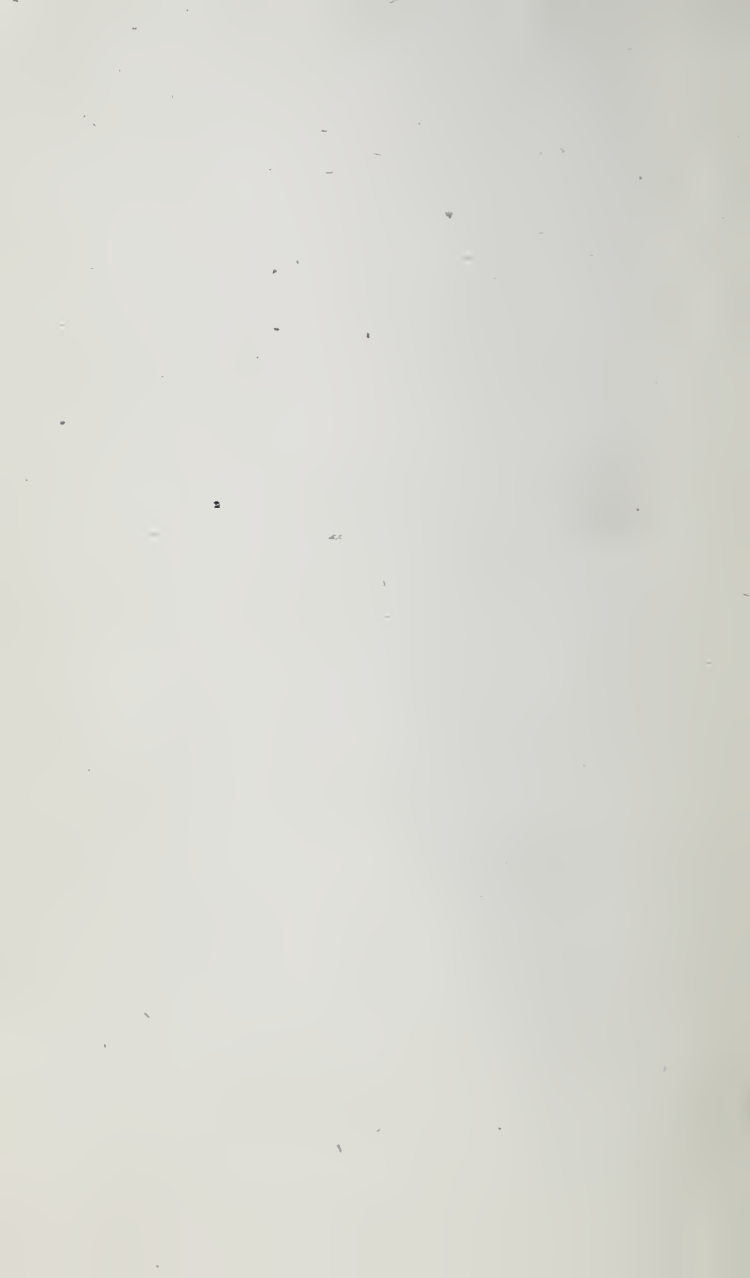
VOLUME

REFERENCE BOOK



REFERENCE BOOK





THE
BIRD KEEPER'S GUIDE
AND COMPANION:

CONTAINING
PLAIN DIRECTIONS FOR KEEPING AND BREEDING
CANARIES, AND GOLDFINCH AND LINNET MULES,
AND ALL OTHER SONG BIRDS.

AS WELL AS
PRACTICAL RECIPES
FOR
THE PREVENTION AND CURE OF THOSE DISORDERS
TO WHICH THEY ARE LIABLE.

IN WHICH
THE CAUSE IS SHEWN WHY SO MANY BIRDS ARE FOUND DEAD IN THEIR
CAGES, AND WHY SO MANY YOUNG BIRDS ARE DESTROYED
IN THE BREEDING SEASON;

WITH THE
BEST METHODS OF PREVENTION.

THE GERMAN METHOD OF TEACHING BIRDS
TO SING TUNES.

DIRECTIONS FOR MAKING GERMAN PASTE, &c.

LONDON

DEAN AND SON, THREADNEEDLE STREET.

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PREFACE.

THE following Treatise is compiled with the intention of instructing the young Bird Keeper in the best methods of feeding birds in general; also the most effectual way of breeding Canaries, and Goldfinch and Linnet Mules.

The remarks are drawn from long, and, in some instances, dear-bought experience; but will be the means, no doubt, of saving the life of many a handsome and melodious songster, as well as of preventing regret at their loss. The author, therefore, presumes to hope that the attempt is at least praiseworthy.

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Having said thus much, it may not be improper here to state, in order to guard my readers against deception, that they should never purchase a bird in a hurry, but to let their ears as well as their eyes be equally satisfied.

I would advise those of my readers who may be in want of a bird, not to purchase of such persons as carry them through the streets for sale; for the deceptions practised are so great, that it often occurs that even a different species of bird is sold from that which may have been represented. Nor would I recommend them to purchase until they have heard their song. A respectable bird shop is the most likely place of meeting with the description of birds best suited to your purpose.

INTRODUCTION.

THOSE who keep birds in confinement, for their beauty or musical powers, should recollect that these little harmless prisoners can only obtain, in their wiry abode, such food as their keepers may think proper to give them; it behoves us, therefore, to supply them with that which is best calculated for their support, varying it as occasion requires, and to provide them regularly with clean water, gravel, &c. This is the least we can do, in return for their pleasing songs, with which they so frequently favour us.

Although nature has not gifted them with the power of speech, yet she has given them instinct sufficient to make their wants known when neglected by their keepers: instead of their usual song, they will make a shrill and plaintive call, rubbing their beaks against the wires of their prison, with all the force their strength will permit, in hopes, by these means, to draw the attention of their keep-

ers towards them. When these signals of distress are disregarded, the poor prisoner has but little chance of relief; misery and death generally follow. Careless, indeed, must that person be, who gives cause for such sorrowful intimations. If, however, some helping hand does not quickly supply them with food, to satisfy the cravings of hunger, and plenty of clean water, to moisten their fevered tongues, but little or no hope of life remains. If their keepers were but to see them when in the agonies of death, still struggling to retain that life which had been previously spent for their amusement, they would shudder at the shocking consequences of their neglect.

If every person, who keeps birds, were to make a point of attending to their little charge once a day, always before they took their own meals, either of a morning or evening, it would soon become so habitual, that no one could well forget them;—it might always be done in a very few minutes: therefore it is a poor excuse to say—Oh! I forgot it. If this plan was persevered in, it would be the means of preventing much unpleasantness both to the keeper and to the innocent prisoners; their lives would be often saved, and they would thereby be enabled to repeat their usual song, which, in all probability, they would do for years. It cannot for a moment be

supposed that such circumstances arise from a bad or vicious disposition; for, I trust, there can be no one found who could derive any gratification, but rather be agonized, at the thought of having starved to death an innocent and pleasing prisoner.

Death does not, at all times, proceed from not feeding them regularly, but oftentimes from causes little known or thought of. They may have plenty of seed in the requisite place for such food, but it may be of that inferior quality which prevents them from eating it. Sometimes it proceeds from small vermin, somewhat of the bug species, which breed, more or less, in every cage, although imperceptible to the naked eye; they nestle themselves in the crevices and joints of the cage, dispersing themselves in the night, and feed on the life-blood of our feathered songsters, who would escape, if at liberty, from the annoyance of such a multitude of tormentors. When sufficiently glutted, or daylight appears, they return to their hiding places, waiting, like other evil doers, the return of darkness, to recommence their nightly torments. From such repeated sallies the little songsters are worried and sucked to death, and they will be found, on examination, to be mere skeletons. At other times it proceeds from over kindness, if I may use the term; that is to say, by feeding them too bountifully on

such things as chickweed, groundsel, plantain, lettuce, and the like, which are not ripe and seedy.

Seed is the chief food necessary for a great portion of the feathered tribe; in fact, the principal thing they require, if good, when in health;—care, however, should be taken to select such seed as is nourishing, which may be done with little or no trouble. Before you purchase any, take care to examine it well; if it is of a bright and glossy surface, without any black particles amongst it, (which denote that MICE frequent the places in which it is kept,) it is generally good; but if you find it smell offensively, either from this or some other equally pernicious cause, do not buy it; nor if you find it mildewed, or of a dull cast, will it do; but when clean and bright, and heavy in hand, there is no danger, and it may be given freely to your birds. Unwholesome seed oftentimes destroys them.

If birds are in health and good condition, their feathers will be sleek and smooth, adhering close to their bodies, while they will jump from place to place with active cheerfulness, straining their little throats to bring forth sounds of harmony, in hopes by such music to obtain the approbation of their kind protectors. When sick and ill, their natural gaiety forsakes them, and a dull lethargy takes possession of

their whole frame; they will crouch in a melancholy stupor, with their heads under their wings, and no longer enliven us with their song. When these symptoms show themselves, endeavour quickly to find out from what cause it proceeds. First examine the seed and water; next see if they are swelled or inflamed in the bowels, or if they are moulting off their feathers. If none of these are the cause, and the bird appears lean and out of condition, look for vermin in the cage, which at all events had better be cleaned out, and washed with the lotion; do the same to the bird, with a soft shaving brush, soap and warm water, and dry it with very soft muslin before the fire;—this will help to kill those insects which may have harboured amongst its feathers, and will also do it good. For moult, swelling, husk, &c. refer to the remedies hereafter stated.

Before I enter further into detail, I shall here state the best method of distinguishing the MALE from the FEMALE. Many persons who have had long practice can, in many instances, tell by the eye, on examination. This method is unpleasant, and, to many persons not acquainted with the proper means of handling them, dangerous; for many a poor bird loses its life from unskilful handling.

The only means of coming to a positive conclusion

regarding the sex of the canary bird is to hear it sing; therefore, having seen a bird that pleases the eye, let the ear also be equally gratified; if this is done, no dispute can possibly arise as to its gender. A cock, when in full vigour and health, will be very loud with his song; hens make only a humble effort to accomplish such an object, repeating the same imperfect notes over and over. Not possessing any natural power of music, they are incapable of improvement; still they strive to please. This in general is not considered sufficient inducement to cherish and protect them, and they are consequently treated but indifferently by the generality of persons; they find, however, many friends amongst those who propagate their species, as they well know the value of a good mother, for much depends on her, as regards the rearing of any young; if she is not kind and attentive, but little good proceeds from breeding. BEWARE OF CATS AND RATS; and even mice should be carefully prevented from getting into your cages, or to your seeds, or to any thing you give your birds either to eat or to drink.

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THE
BIRD-KEEPER'S GUIDE.

CANARY-BIRDS.

FIRST call my reader's attention to this class of birds, considering them to rank higher, in the estimation of most persons, than any other description of feathered songsters, more particularly in the metropolis and its environs. From their vivacity and their familiar disposition, they are much admired, and live, if properly managed, in seeming happiness for years, reconciled to their wiry abode, and bringing forth their offspring in cages, as freely as when in a state of nature; heeding but little those casual noises which so frequently occur whilst they are building their nests, laying their eggs, or rearing their little ones; and from such conciliatory and pleasing manners, added to their sweet melody and delicate colour, they have ingratiated themselves into general favour.

In a work of this kind, it is not necessary to enter into particulars relative to the natural history of the canary; the object being to instruct those who wish to rear and keep them. It will be sufficient to say, that they are natives of the Canary islands, from which they derive their name, and from whence they have been introduced into most parts of Europe, as

well as into more distant climes: their breed is abundantly propagated throughout this kingdom; thousands of them are annually brought into the metropolis by individuals who collect them from the different breeders; the greatest portion being brought from Norfolk and Yorkshire. This influx, in addition to the numbers bred by its inhabitants, fully proves the estimation in which they are held in London.

The Germans pay more attention to the song of these birds than any other class of breeders, teaching them, when young, the notes of the nightingale and titlark; thereby adding much pleasing harmony to the song of their birds. They may be heard throughout that country, singing all times of the night as well as day; being instructed to sing at night, without adopting a practice revolting to humanity, which I am sorry to say, has been done in this country. I trust that no such monster can now be found, who would be brute enough to put out the eyes of a little harmless melodist, that may with ease be taught to sing when required, without being deprived of nature's greatest blessing. The plan adopted in Germany is simple, and perfectly practicable.

The cages of the birds intended for evening singers, are kept covered during the day, so as to prevent them from seeing their food; they will, of course, take their rest while deprived of light; in the evening, when they are wanted to sing, they are uncovered; when, seeing the light from the candles they will, if any sort of noise be made, however discordant, sing almost immediately. Whether this is done from a superior taste for music, I know not; but this I know, it speaks well for the humanity of the Germans. These people lend out their birds to the nobility and gentry of that country, for which

they pay a certain sum annually; their owners attending on them daily, to feed and clean out their cages; and when any of their stud fall off song, the parties are supplied with others; so they have the natural music of these birds every day and every night in the year. Perhaps the profits arising from such trade induces them to be very choice with their birds; of this, however, I am convinced, that if the English people bestowed as much time and attention as would be required to obtain this object, our own countrybred birds might be taught to sing the same harmonious strains that the German birds have learned. The best way of accomplishing this, is to keep the young cock canaries, as soon as they can feed themselves, out of the hearing of any other bird, save the nightingale and tit-lark, which should be their only instructors; they would then naturally imbibe a portion of each bird's song, thereby adding to their own natural powers much harmonious and delightful melody.

The Germans export, yearly, great numbers of these birds to Russia, France, and Holland, and were formerly in the habit of doing the same into this country; but of late years it has fallen off. There are several individuals in and about the Metropolis, who import these birds. It is the practice of some of the German bird-fanciers to take an occasional trip to the continent, for the purpose of collecting the sweet song canaries, as well as piping bull-finches; they bring them over for sale, and frequently obtain very high prices for some of them: but the expences of the journey, of collecting, freightage, and other incidental charges, tend to limit this mode of introduction, while the same circumstances act in keeping up the value of the birds. Taking these reasons into consideration, we cannot wonder at the high prices

asked for these birds. If, however, the same method of teaching were to be given to canaries bred in this country, we should have musicians of equal talent, and very superior in external beauty; for there is no place where richness of colour and beauty of plumage are so much cultivated as in London.

There is a class of canaries known by the name of LIZARDS, and another called QUAKERS; the first resembles the fancy birds, having a clean yellow cap, their back and breasts bespangled all over with green and black, something of the colour of the small creeping creature from which they derive their name; these may be obtained by matching a pair of very strong fancy birds together, or by a fancy bird and common green canary; but the latter will, in all probability, throw the young ones broken-capped; that is to say, their principal beauty will be destroyed by having their heads partially, or totally, covered with green feathers. The birds, called QUAKERS, are of a light brown or fawn colour, which spreads itself over the whole of their plumage, making them, in my opinion, appear very dull and heavy to the eye, which I conceive to be any thing but an improvement in the fancy.

All prize birds must have eighteen black flying feathers in each wing, without a white one, this being the number which most birds are supplied with; they must also have every feather in their tail black, amounting to twelve.

Although these birds, when clean moulted off, and exhibited for prizes, appear like a ball of burnished gold; yet, when in their first nestling feathers, they resemble a green bird, except their cap and saddle, which are both clean, and free from any

foul feathers. The properties for which the true fanciers breed are as follows:—

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1st. Property.—Cap for colour and magnitude. | From the beak to the back of the neck of a clear orange colour. |
| 2d. Spangled back. | The ground must be of a rich colour, the feathers edged with black. |
| 3d. Open saddle. | The feathers on their loins must be free from black, the same colour as the cap. |
| 4th. Wings and tail for blackness home to the quill. | Every feather in the wings and tail must be black, without any white ones. |
| 5th. Fair breast and regular. | The whole of their breast must be free from black feathers, of the same tint as cap and saddle. |

These are the main points for which they breed, for although some fanciers enumerate several others, they are now considered trifling and of secondary consideration. This rich and regularly-contrasted plumage adds much to their beauty, as well as profit to the breeders.

BREEDING CANARIES.

MANY of my readers are, no doubt, fond of this innocent and rational pastime, and find much pleasure and amusement in propagating the species of such delightful and harmonious songsters; I proceed, therefore, to give them a few useful lessons for the better accomplishing this object, which being drawn

from experience, may be followed with every probability of success; and be the means of preventing, in a great measure, those disappointments which too often occur during the breeding season.

Valentine's day is generally looked forward to as the time most proper for beginning this amusing pastime; but from too much anxiety and haste, disappointments often arise. To avoid them, do not turn your birds into the breeding-cage too soon; however, as most persons are in the habit of following the old system, I shall not entirely draw their attention from this loving day, but merely quote the old proverb, "the more haste, the less speed." On this, or some future day, the birds may be matched, agreeable to one's own fancy; some preferring FANCY PRIZE BIRDS, others CLEAN JONQUE, and others again PIED; or perhaps some will prefer all GREEN.

Those who wish to rear FANCY BIRDS, should first make themselves masters of the art of breeding and managing the commoner sort; this, in fact, becomes necessary, as it requires much care to obtain such birds as are likely to produce that description of fancy stock which will repay expences. If you wish very high coloured, breed Jonque and Jonque.—Each bird should have all the properties specified in the before-mentioned articles; but I would recommend a JONQUE COCK matched with a MEALY HEN, or you may transverse them: one should be what is termed strong, the other, fine; STRONG means those birds with plenty of black; FINE, the reverse. Although the old ones may be of the best breed, still many of their offspring may be foul:—for instance, either broken capped, or having one or two white feathers in their wings or tail; either of these defects prevent them from being considered prize birds. These

birds are oftentimes very high coloured, and will answer the purpose of those who wish to breed high coloured birds. They are in general considered by gentlemen who breed prize birds as refuse stock, and are in consequence sold off at low prices, and may be bought from ten to twenty shillings each.

CLEAN JONQUE of the common sort of birds, are obtained by selecting your birds of the same colour, without either of them having any dark feathers; those produced from this stock, however, are in general very thin and short feathered, which make them always appear rough and ragged, although of a rich colour: this certainly takes away much of their beauty.

Jonque and Mealy, paired together, oftentimes produce equally high coloured birds, much handsomer in shape, as well as beauty of plumage, and possessing much softness; their sleek and glossy appearance make them much admired.

PIED-BIRDS are produced by matching a green jonque with a clean jonque, or a mealy hen. I would recommend breeders at all times to match them one of each colour; because the birds will be larger and equally handsome.

GREEN-BIRDS are thrown by pairing two of the same colour; but if they should be both green jonques, their offspring often prove clear jonques. These are the kind of birds most usually bred. Breeders should not match two turned-crowned birds together; it makes them bald-pated.

Having matched your birds agreeably to your taste, place them cage to cage for a few weeks, to make them better acquainted, when they may be

turned in together, so as to mate with one another. Before they are turned into the breeding-cage, supply them with egg, which must be boiled quite hard, and chopped fine; if a great number of birds, it is quicker done by grating it through a coarse tin grater. Mix with the egg an equal quantity of stale roll crumbs, or sweet stale bun crumbs, grated through the same grater; and now and then, to make them familiar with you, stick little pieces of sponge biscuit, or small cakes, commonly called ladies' fingers, or pieces of saffron bun, between the wires of their cages.

A little bruised hemp-seed, or whole hemp-seed, and a little maw seed, should be daily mixed with their rape and canary seed; they should also have a few heads of ripe groundsel, ripe plantains, water cresses, radish tops, or small salad, but all green, and fresh every day; any of these things will tend to not only make them mate sooner than their common daily food, but preserve their health: no doubt the cock will, in a few days, be observed feeding his mate.

During the time of their courtship, I mean while their cages are placed side by side, their intended new place of residence should be cleaned out; not only for their own comfort, and your profit, but for the purpose of keeping out troublesome and unwelcome intruders. Wash, therefore, their breeding cages well and thoroughly with soft or strong black soap and water, both inside and out, and particularly in all the corners, crevices, and joinings, of the cage; to get at which you must use a painter's brush, and rub and press it well with the soap suds into all the crevices and corners, for in these places lurk the little minute vermin which destroy more

birds in the breeding season then all other causes put together;—for the same reason also, never allow the nest boxes to be made out of the corners or any other part of the breeding cage, nor be fixed to it; but have moveable boxes to hang on hooks or nails, as you cannot by any possibility keep them free from these destructive vermin, unless you can take out the nest boxes, and wash them clean inside and out; burning the dirty nests; and giving them a fresh clean box and nest also, as directed in page 24.

After you have thoroughly washed your cages as above directed, wash your painter's brush clean, and dry it;—and when the cage is quite dry, then with your clean painter's brush dipped in the lotion named in page 67, you must wash well again into all the joints and crevices of the cage, both inside and outside as well as the inside and outside of the nest-boxes; this, if well done, will prevent vermin from breeding in the cage for that season.

Place the breeding-cages in an airy, and light room; and if the morning sun shines into the room for two or three hours, it will be much the better. Avoid draughts of air, for young callow birds are tender, and cannot stand cold streams of fresh air. In fine weather, open one of the windows, an hour or two early in the morning, when the sun shines, and in hot weather, leave it open the greater part of the day, and also for a portion of the night, provided you prevent draughts by keeping the doors closed. Take care the window has a secure wire guard.

The grand principle for you to observe is an even temperature, for too much heat is as much to be avoided as too little; the former, with want of good air, making the hens sickly, producing weakening perspirations, and breeding very weak birds.

So dispose your breeding-cages as that you may conveniently get to them, to enable you to get at, or take down and put up, the breeding-boxes, as occasion may require, without disturbing the hen.

It is always preferable to have a large breeding-cage, for the more room canary birds have to fly in, the stronger the birds become; and it must have two nest boxes at the end; and let the perches be full sized, and steadily fixed, that the birds may hold firmly on them; which is of much consequence in a breeding cage.

It is sometimes the practice to match two hens with one cock,—if you follow this plan, you must prepare your birds for it beforehand, by keeping the two hens together in a good sized cage all the previous winter, so that they may become friendly and familiar with each other; otherwise one will disturb the other while setting, and most likely destroy each others nests, or young ones.

At the latter end of March, and not before, the birds may be turned into the breeding-cage; but if they are kept back a little longer, so much the better, as cold weather only tends to injure your birds, without much probability of producing and rearing any young ones. Over haste oftentimes makes the poor hens lay their eggs with difficulty, if at all; hence arises that distressing complaint termed EGG-BOUND. This disorder (proceeding from cold) often kills hens, which in all probability might have lived to have brought up a good number of young birds; breeders should recollect this.

A table spoonful of salt, mixed into twice the quantity of mortar, should, when it is hard, be kept

in each breeding cage, for the birds to peck at; also plenty of dry fine red gravel; the birds are fond of this, and it will, in a great measure, prevent this complaint, as well as their laying soft eggs, which is more dangerous, and when it happens, it in general produces death. Soft meadow hay, dry moss, and clean wool, are best materials for forming their nest.

Stuff for nesting is sold at most bird-shops in small nets; this will do very well, provided you wash the hair well with strong soap and water, and then with clean water, so as to get out all the dust and dirt, which remains from the process used to get it off the skins, and dry it properly before you put it into the cage. Some breeders, perhaps, will say this is useless trouble—a mere waste of time, from which no advantage will arise. I AM CONVINCED OF THE CONTRARY. Before I adopted this plan, I have lost hundreds of young birds from vermin breeding more freely in dirty nests, than in such as have been washed. Oftentimes hens forsake their nests when the young ones have been formed in their shells. These little vermin, which you can scarcely see with the naked eye, so completely worry the poor hen, that she can sit no longer on her eggs.

Before I found out this, as well as the lotion, I have lost out of my breeding stock old as well as young ones; of the latter perhaps a hundred in a season. On going into my breeding-room, I have found, in one or two instances, hens dead on their eggs; the poor things were mere skeletons. On examination, I found them covered with small insects, and the nests and nest bags swarming with the same sort of troublesome vermin, which must have sucked them to death; the poor old hens were sitting on their eggs in their usual position, suffering

themselves to be worried to death rather than quit their charge. We do not, however, generally find them inclined to put up with such repeated torments; and they are therefore necessitated to forsake their eggs or young.

One cannot well see the shape of these insects with the naked eye; but, with a magnifying glass, they resemble somewhat the bug species. If you kill them on white paper, it is stained with blood; in fact, it is evident that they wholly subsist on the blood, which they extract by slow degrees from the vitals of those little songsters. Hence arises much disappointment as well as vexation during the breeding season. The poor hens often get blamed for neglect; but are not such continuous torments enough to make the birds quit their nests? When at liberty, they preserve themselves free from these minute tormentors, by rubbing themselves in heaps of sand or gravel, and by sporting and washing themselves in shallow gravelly brooks; and as we make them prisoners for our gratification, we should strive all in our power to destroy their enemies, and ensure the poor birds' comfort.

I would therefore, recommend, particularly in hot weather, to give a fresh box and nest a day or two before the hen hatches, which should be made of the same stuff, and in a box of the same shape, so as to resemble the one which is intended to be taken away: it should be formed round by shaking a hot egg in it, such a one as you have just boiled for your birds. While the nest remains warm, move the canary's eggs into it; be careful not to break them; a bone or wooden spoon is best to move them with; as they are then too delicate to bear the least handling. If this be done quickly just before their roost

time, the hen will sit on the eggs as if nothing had happened; the warmth prevents them from being chilled, and also prevents any immediate danger to the young ones when they are hatched. The vermin would perhaps have destroyed them ere they were two days old. When you have changed the nest boxes, burn the nest, and wash the nest box clean as before-directed, and it will when dry be ready for use again.

The breeding of these birds will be encouraged, if from the first day you pair your birds till the last day when you part them, you feed them daily on egg, as well as with the several kinds of seed; new-laid eggs are best. Boil the egg very hard; and when it is quite cold, chop it small, mix with it a few crumbs of sweet stale saffron bun, or stale roll crumbs grated. This food is also excellent to give the birds to rear their little ones on; as are also a few emmden grots placed in their cage.

Feed your birds every morning, and do not omit to give them a little fresh water cress, small salad, plantain, cos lettuce leaf, or the like, and remove all stale soft food, or greens, or it will cause gripes and looseness. Be sure that the seed you give to your birds is clean, clear, and glossy, and on no account give them mouldy or mildewed seed; now and then you may add a little linseed to the rape and canary.

Give your birds plenty of clean water and fresh gravel; they are fond of both, and will not thrive well without them. The water-dish may be put into the cage for an hour or two each day, about noon. The dish should be three or four inches deep, with about an inch and a half of water in it: and when you take it out of the cage put in a handful of gravel.

Canary birds mostly have three nests of young

every season, and lay from four to five eggs, seldom more; when it does happen, it is of little advantage; four or five are sufficient for any small bird to cover. Some mischievous birds will break and suck their eggs as soon as they are laid; to prevent this, supply them with plenty of food every night, that the birds may feed early in the morning: if this does not succeed, put a little mustard, or bitter aloes dissolved, inside a bad egg; when they begin to peck it, the bad taste may prevent a repetition, and in all probability induce them to rear instead of destroying their progeny.

Other hens, who are too careful of their eggs, will begin to sit on them as soon as they are laid, thereby hatching them irregularly. Nature has required fourteen days as the proper number to engender their young, which remain blind for seven days; but when the hen sits irregularly, one bird is hatched two or three days before the last laid egg is brought to maturity; consequently, the first-born becomes, by that time, stronger, and will in all probability prevent the younger branch from arriving to perfection. To avoid this, take the eggs away as soon as they are laid, which is generally early in the morning, substituting a bone egg, made to resemble a bird's egg; these may be bought at any bird-shop; the real eggs should be kept covered in dry bran.

When you find the hen has omitted her mornings' present, take away the artificial eggs, and return her own; by which means the young will be hatched all at one time, and therefore better enabled to cope with one another, and much more likely to obtain an equal share of food from the fostering mouths of their parents.

Eggs will oftentimes prove barren, and of no service. Some persons say the birds are not enabled to know this; while others insist, that an instinct is given to the bird, by which it is impelled to desert bad eggs.—But as the time which a bird sets produces weakness, it will be as well to save useless trouble. When they have sat for eight days, it may be known whether the eggs are barren or not; if they appear thick and muddy, they are good; take one up lengthways, by means of a small thin bone spoon, and look at it against a strong light; if transparent, without any difference or change of colour from that which it had when first laid, it is useless. Do the same to the others, if all alike they should be destroyed; but, on the other hand, if thick, so as to prevent your seeing light through it, it is good; be quick in returning it to the nest. When the eggs are bad, do not suffer the hen to nest for a week or so, that she may be enabled to regain her strength from the weakness of her last laying.

On the thirteenth night, being the night before you expect the young to be hatched, give the old ones plenty of soft victuals; the yolk and white of fresh laid eggs, boiled quite hard, and chopped fine, or grated through a coarse tin grater, mixed with an equal quantity of stale roll crumbs, grated, or sponge-biscuit, stale saffron bun, or small cakes called ladies' fingers; in fact, any kind of light nourishing thing, such as is given to young children; add to this a little maw-seed: making such victuals fresh every day, giving the birds a good quantity of it every night, and again about the middle of the day. It must be given fresh over night, to be in readiness for the old ones to feed their young as soon as daylight appears, and prevent any chance of the young dying for want of it.

Let them also have, daily, a little water cress, or ripe groundsel and plantain, supplying them with fresh every day; do not by any means give large-leaved, unripe green food, as it brings on swelling or inflammation in their bowels, but only the well seeded kind. Be very careful to chop up the hard boiled egg with a clean knife, and on a very clean board; many a breed of young birds have been lost through the egg having imbibed a taste from a dirty knife or board, and the young birds starved to death.

Look at the nest of young birds twice a week, to see if all is going on right; if they appear red, with their crops full of victuals, you may be assured they are doing well; in case, however, you find them of a sickly pale hue, without any food in their neck or crops, most likely the nest and birds are infested with vermin.—Change their nest box and nest for a new one immediately, made warm with a hot egg as directed in page 24, which should be done as expeditiously as possible; for many hens are of a very fretful disposition, and will not sanction any interruption to their maternal care, often forsaking their young by too much familiarity. When this happens to be the case, feed the young occasionally with a small bit of the yolk of hard egg, dissolved by one or two drops of clean water; add to this a little sopped bun or sponge-cake, forming it into a thin-nish paste, and with the point of a wooden skewer feed them every hour, to keep up their strength. If the old hen or cock should feed them, you need not. Oftentimes the cock will bring them up, although the hen may have forsaken her little ones; do not, therefore, keep them out of the breeding-cage, but give the cock every opportunity to supply them with food from his fostering mouth. In case he does not do it, they may be taken entirely away,

and brought up by hand; keeping their nest covered with flannel to prevent cold, feeding them on the before-mentioned soft food.

When five or six days old, scalded rape seed bruised may be given with the egg, &c.; and when they get older, you need not bruise the scalded rape, but give it whole, mixed up with the other ingredients; so continue until you find they can feed themselves on the same food, which should be placed in small quantities against the wires of their cage, to tempt them to peck at it, giving them bruised rape and a little bruised hemp seeds, they not being able to crack whole seed until a month old. Do not therefore omit soft food until four or five weeks old. A few heads of ripe groundsel or plantain may be given occasionally, but not persevered in for any length of time.

Sometimes, when the eggs are irregularly hatched, particularly under a young mother, she feels so anxious for the eggs not hatched, as to refuse to leave her nest to feed the young ones that have already come to life; and thus the poor birds get starved. To prevent this, take care every thing enticing in food, as egg, and crumbs, fresh greens, &c. is provided and given over night.—Then watch, to see if the hen feed, or the cock carry food to her; if neither be the case, you must put the hen off her nest, and if she sees plenty of food, she will eat: and the hen, thus induced to take food, will, when she sees the young ones gaping for food, feed them, which will induce the cock to assist her in this duty; for when once the cock sees the hen feed the little ones, he will follow the example.

The hen will frequently begin to make a fresh

nest when the young are about a fortnight old, leaving the cock to bring them to maturity. In this case, care should be taken to supply her with a fresh clean nest box, and a sufficient quantity of proper materials, in due time, in order that she may not disfigure the young, which she will often do, by plucking out their down feathers to form the lining of the new nest—hereby preventing much inconvenience to the young ones, as well as keeping them more perfect in plumage. When this plan is adopted, they may remain with the old ones until the day before the hen again hatches; by which time they in general feed themselves on soft food.

When caged off, give them plenty of egg, &c. and a little ripe seedy plantain or water cress, or ripe groundsel, twisted round the wires of the cage, particularly near their water, placing the cage in a warm place opposite the window, so that they may more easily find out the places in which their victuals are kept. Some breeders make a point to give a sprig or two of each the above herbs, daily, leaving the birds to chuse that which is best for them. Do not keep above two hatchings of young birds in one cage, unless a very large one, for they are apt to pull one another's feathers out; and if they once begin to do so, they seldom leave it off. Should therefore you find them do this, put them into separate cages. The larger the cages in which you keep canary birds, the stronger and better birds they will become.

All the feathered tribe go into moult in the autumn, sometime in September; do not therefore continue to breed from your birds after August; it only tends to weaken them, without any probability of their strength affording them the means of fostering any later hatched birds, and prevents in a great

measure their getting over this sickly and tiresome disorder. (see MOULTING).

It is rather a nice point to decide for a certainty on the gender of young canaries; they are generally distinguished by their high colouring, more particularly on the cap of the head, saddle, point of the shoulder, or butt of the wing; also a few feathers over the eye richer in colour than the others, forming a sort of eye-brow; no such points are observed in hens, they are always paler than the cock bird, and may be pretty well distinguished.

The common or gay canaries are never so high coloured as the fancy bird; their tinting is more of a lemon colour; whereas the prize birds are of a red or orange cast, and may be contrasted just in the same proportion as a lemon is to an orange.

GOLDFINCHES.

THESE birds are natives of our own climate, and may be seen in large flocks flying through most parts of it; if this was not the case, they would, from their rich and variegated plumage, be more admired than any other description of feathered songsters. There are, however, some individuals in this, as well as in foreign countries, who take much pleasure in their song, as well as find gratification in their beautiful plumage. In India, they find a ready market. Of late years there has been a cross, bred with hen canaries, the produce of which are more handsome, and their strength of song is improved by these means. When marked with an equal portion of each species, they are termed PIED MULES, and

are much admired on account of their rich and beautiful external appearance, as well as their improved song, and are oftentimes sold for very high prices.

Breeders differ in their opinion respecting the most effectual way of obtaining them; some thinking it necessary to have a chibald or cheviot goldfinch. From whence this name is derived, I know not, unless first found on those hills; they are but seldom caught; perhaps not one out of a thousand will be found amongst those taken by our regular bird-catchers. They are, in my opinion, a chance bird, bred by the common and only kind of goldfinch found in this country, not being two distinct sorts: they are distinguished by having a white mark under their throat, which divides the circle of red found round the heads of all goldfinches.

If persons were to wait for this particular bird before they attempted to breed mules, their patience would be exhausted. Those who think that the same object might be obtained without having to wait so long, will therefore procure one of the usual sort, some time in April, when on flight seeking their mates; the cocks being then considered to be in a fit state for breeding, either with their own species, or with a hen canary. This, to some certain extent, is true; but it must be acknowledged by all bird-fanciers, that this very rankness makes them very ill in confinement, and they will but seldom be reconciled to such a small place of abode; nor will they feed on such sort of seed as is given in general, but require hemp-seed, which injures and ultimately kills them. It is, therefore, advisable to procure them before they arrive at this forward state, because they are more easily brought to feed on canary, flax, and

rape-seed, without the necessity of supplying them with a quantity of other seed, which injures them, or else deprives them of their natural rich colouring; and if freely given when they are in moult, it will actually cause their new feathers to be of a dull brown, without the least tint of yellow or red remaining on their feathers. To prevent this, feed them at all times, unless breeding, on canary and flax seed, equal quantities of each; and a little green food, such as ripe chickweed, groundsel, plantain, or water-cress; all other things are unnecessary when in health.

The cock may be distinguished from the hen by its high colouring; the shoulder quite a jet black, instead of a brown; the red of their heads bright and transparent; the same to be observed in regard to the yellow in the wing feathers; but the first two points are certain. Many a rich hen will be highly coloured; but the feathers round the beak, and at the points of their shoulders, will be found, on handling them, of a brown cast—the cock's quite black. If a person compare one of each sex together, he will soon find out the difference.

When the cock is first taken, it should be placed near the cage of the hen canary, which should be supplied with proper materials for making her nest, feeding them both on rich and nourishing food, as egg, &c. the same as stated in breeding of canaries. When she appears to be inclined to form her repository for her eggs, nature will induce her to call for a mate; when this is observed, turn the goldfinch into the breeding-cage over night, so as to prevent a quarrel, which would otherwise happen, no doubt; she will, in all probability, make her morning's call as soon as the break of day appears: the gentleman

will sometimes take advantage of this forwardness, and most likely, if the same exercise is permitted every morning during her laying, young mules will be produced.

Goldfinches are naturally fond of pecking at every thing which comes in their reach, oftentimes destroying the nest or eggs; if they are found doing such mischief, they must be sent back to learn better manners, adopting the plan of turning them, at night, into the breeding cage. In case they appear kind towards the female, let them remain in their happy quarters, watching them narrowly, so as to notice whether they have a taste for raw egg or not. As soon as you find the hen has laid, take away her egg, and place it in some small box, covering it with dry bran or wool: and in preference to putting in a bone egg, put in a bad egg; this may be easily done, most breeders having rather too many of that sort. Mark it with ink so as to distinguish it from the others, for by this method you have a better opportunity of knowing the disposition of the goldfinch. Do this until the end of her laying, when you must follow the same plan as laid down in breeding canaries. (See page 26.

If you find the eggs are good, be careful and watch him narrowly, to prevent his killing them. They will frequently pull the young ones out of their nests, and throw them to the bottom of the cage, thereby killing them on the instant, or breaking some of their little limbs; from such accidents they are left to perish with cold and hunger.

Breeding from fresh caught birds is both dangerous and troublesome; I would, therefore, advise my readers who intend to enter upon this description of

fancy, to procure their birds some considerable time before hand, by which means much labour and vexation is saved. Some time in July or August, get the young goldfinches, commonly called grey-pates, from not having moulted off their nestling feathers about their head. These birds should be kept amongst canaries until two years old, to make them better acquainted with each other before they are turned up to breed from; if turned sooner, they are of no use. They will then be very familiar in pairing with a hen canary, if matched in the same manner as laid down in the directions for breeding canaries, just as freely as if with one of their own breed; feeding their young with the same attention as a cock canary would do, preventing thereby a vast deal of unnecessary trouble.

I have by following the directions here laid down, succeeded in hatching two nests of young ones from one cock and two hens, five in one nest, out of five eggs; in the other nest four young ones, out of the same number; they were all brought to life at the same time; this is a sufficient proof of the accuracy of my plan. I had the satisfaction to see their maternal parents feed them with their fostering mouths, on egg, sponge cake, and maw seed mixed together, with ripe groundsel and the other herbs before named, in a pot of water placed inside their cage. These articles I make a point of replenishing every night and noon, so as to give the old birds plenty of sweet and nourishing food, to supply the call of their little ones.

LINNETS.

THESE birds are considered very common; it

is true they are very numerous, and do not possess any striking colour to attract the eye; their sweet, soft, and melodious notes, however, fully compensate for this deficiency, if it is to be called one; for they are continually swelling out their little throats to bring forth pleasing sounds, to gratify the ears of those who may be fond of hearing them. They are often crossed with a hen canary; but their dark plumage takes away from the offspring any perceivable share of their maternal parent. Linnet mules, therefore, are not so much sought after as the pied goldfinch ones, most persons being desirous of pleasing the sight, as well as gratifying the ear.

The same plan should be followed as laid down in goldfinch mules. Get nestlings, or branchers, which will do equally as well, and prevent the trouble of rearing them by hand; they should be taken before they are clean moulted off, in June or July. When first caught they must be kept quiet; and feed them on rape, flax, and a little bruised hemp-seed; with a little fresh seedy groundsel, plantain, water cress, &c. as may be most easily obtained; and they should not be turned up to breed until the second season.

They are often brought to sing the wood-lark's song, and many of them, particularly at Birmingham, where this fancy is much admired, will go through the whole of that bird's song without making one of their natural jerks. Birds so true to the notes of the wood-lark are invaluable, as we have their song nearly all the year, without the same chance of losing the bird by moult. Being of an easy and familiar disposition, they will live for years in confinement, moulting off their feathers at proper season, which their tutors but seldom accomplish, unless forced. This makes wood-lark fancy both expensive

and vexing; for it is unpleasant to lose them just at the time they are in full song, and become domesticated. To prevent, in some measure, this occurrence, see MOULTING.

ABERDEVINE.

THIS is a merry little bird, and arrives here from the South of France early in the spring. In their plumage, which is of yellow green east, they resemble the canary, though somewhat smaller; their song is soft and pleasing. There are some few persons in the metropolis, who endeavour, and succeed to some trifling extent, to cross them with the hen canary; when obtained, I do not see any advantage arising from such breed, being much smaller, not gifted with any power of voice, nor in size equal to the canary, goldfinch, or linnet.

Breeding any sort of mules is troublesome pastime, from which fancy but little advantage arises, Nature having ordained that men shall not, from his fancied ideas, push her out of her regular course; neither is it permitted that their offspring shall increase and multiply, although they may be somewhat of the same species.

Birds are by naturalists classed into two distinct and separate species; one called HARD BILLED, the other SOFT MEAT; one living on seeds, the other on live food. Any seed birds may be matched together; and they should be turned into a large room, in preference to breeding cages. A soft meat bird cannot be brought to breed with a seed bird; otherwise we should find some fanciers who would cross the nightingale with the canary. God, in his

superior wisdom, has not thought proper to create from two opposite species; neither will he suffer man to take such power out of his hands. Mules are, therefore, quite useless; save and except for their musical talents, and are of no more value than the common canary, unless they should be handsomely marked with soft and rich colouring, so that they may be termed pied mules: this description of bird will repay the breeder, in some measure, for the expense which he has been at, as they are often sold for a considerable sum.

Young birds are like young children, sleeping away the greatest portion of the day as well as the night: during these slumbers, the birds place their heads under their wings. When observed in this position, many persons imagine they are ill; but if you find when they awake that they are cheerful and active, jumping from one position to another, you need not apprehend any immediate danger of sickness, as this lethargy will soon leave them, and, in all probability, you will be favoured with a little soft and pleasing music.

THE BULLFINCH.

THESE birds are natives of this country, and may be found, although not in great numbers, in most parts of it. They are called by various names; in some counties, hoops, in others bull-heads, and in some thick-bills, &c. They were formerly supposed to be very destructive by robbing orchards and gardens of their blossoms and young fruit; consequently, farmers and gardeners took every opportunity of destroying them, but modern knowledge has

discovered that they are great friends to the gardeners; for if they do destroy a few blossoms they much more than compensate for that by seeking out and destroying immense quantities of small insects, which but for them would so increase as to devour every particle of blossom and fruit.

Their natural note is a mere shrill and plaintive whistle, without any claim to admiration; but their beautiful plumage, as well as their quickness of learning, and retentive memory, induce the German people to teach them different national and other airs; and when proficient in this art, they are pleasing companions. The expense and trouble required to bring them to this state of perfection cause them to be very dear; and they are but seldom found in this country, except amongst the rich. The method of teaching them is as follows:—

The young ones should be taken when about twelve or fourteen days old; the best time of finding their nests is about June or July; they should be kept covered down in a wicker basket, as this will give sufficient air, as well as make them gape for food when uncovered. Keep them in this manner until they are full feathered; feed them every hour on soft food, as stated in rearing young canaries by hand (page 28). When quite fledged, put them into separate cages, still feeding them through the wires; leave a little of the victuals against the wires, so as to tempt them to peck it, thereby bringing them on to feed themselves. If they are intended to learn one and the same tune, they may remain all together in the same room; but if otherwise, they must have different school-rooms out of the hearing of each other. A tune on a small bird-organ, made for the purpose, is constantly played to them in slow

time; during these lessons, their cages should be covered with some sort of cloth, so as to darken them, thereby preventing any thing taking off their attention during such instruction. When they can feed themselves, let them have canary, rape, and flax-seed, the greatest portion of the former; they are particularly fond of hemp-seed, but it should only be given in small quantities, as it tends to destroy the beauty of their plumage.

It is necessary to continue their lessons for some considerable time;—it requires plenty of patience and perseverance to bring them to a state of perfection, so as to pipe a tune correctly.

With equal harmony, to pipe or sing
“Rule Britannia,” and “God save the Queen.”

The coeks are much richer in colour than the hens, particularly about their breast, being of a bright red; the female a dull brick-dust colour

THE CHAFFINCH.

THIS is a very pretty bird, possessing much variety in the colours of its plumage. Their natural note is not very musical, although loud; yet they are taught a peculiar kind of note, by some persons considered pleasing and harmonious. They are fed on the same seeds, &c. as a goldfinch or linnet.

THE YELLOW-HAMMER.

THESE birds are very common, and are to be seen in every county; their plumage is beautiful, but they are not gifted with much musical powers. Like

most other birds, they may be improved, and taught to sing with some degree of harmony; and when they are so taught they may be kept in confinement, as they will no doubt gratify their keeper with a soft and musical song; at all events their plumage must be admired, therefore some gratification will arise for the trouble bestowed in feeding them.

The whole of the foregoing birds are considered of one species, as they feed on seed, and are called **HARD-BILLED BIRDS**. I shall now proceed to describe the other class, called **SOFT MEAT BIRDS**, as they feed on living food when in a state of freedom; and I shall begin with the leader of the feathered tribe.

THE NIGHTINGALE.

THESE birds arrive in this country, if the weather be fine, generally in the beginning of April; the cocks arrive some few days before the hens: it would therefore be advisable to take them on their first arrival, as it is then more likely to have one that can sing. Their loud and melodious notes are heard in most counties, and in various places near to the metropolis. They are a very timid and shy bird when in a state of freedom; and it is but seldom that they are seen, and not often heard, during the day, frequenting some sequestered coppice or wood. In such retirement they find themselves less interrupted, and thereby better enabled to amuse with their harmonious voice the opposite sex.

From such fascinating sounds they are, no doubt, in hopes of captivating the hearts of one of them, so as to pair off in triumph. It is but seldom they favour us with a song after this courtship is ended.

Perhaps, during his sojournment in this clime, he would favour us a little oftener with his harmony, but he has got other employment on hand, the procuring of live insects for his mate during her confinement, as well as to feed his little family with, when brought to life.

Such persons as are desirous of hearing them sing in cages, should obtain them early in April, immediately on their first arrival, ere they become mated with the opposite sex; for if deferred till this time, they pine after their mates, and seldom become reconciled to confinement. Immediately on their being taken, they should have the points of their wings tied together, so as to prevent them injuring themselves against the wires of their cage, which they would most probably do, if this plan was not adopted to prevent it.

A few very small pieces of raw beef should be forced down their throats every hour; and they should have a little of the same scraped quite fine, and free from strings, to which add yolk of hard boiled egg, forming it to a proper consistency with a little clean water; put into the tin pans a few gentles, branding worms, ants, or very small meal worms, covering them with the above paste; their moving about will tempt the birds to peck, and thereby sooner induce them to feed on prepared food. Still continue to cram them with small pieces of raw lean beef, to keep them from starving.

When you find they eat the soft food freely, you may omit the forced meat balls, and gradually leave off the live food; for, if continued, they will always look after them, and not feed bountifully on the meat, egg, &c. They should be kept quiet, with

their cages fronting the light, and a thin cloth thrown over, so as to prevent any interruption.

Their pans should be kept sweet and clean; for if the pan is the least dirty or the meat is the least tainted, they will not touch it. Their pans must be boiled out every day without fail; and in hot weather give them fresh made victuals twice a day; if any be left in their pans, it must be thrown away, to prevent its becoming offensive. Such food should neither be too thick nor too thin; the first will prevent their feeding freely, because it cannot be well separated; the latter tends to make them laxative, and frequently brings on weakness or death.

A wicker-fronted cage is preferable to a wired one: it should be of a large size, and it should have a green Persian roller blind, so that it may be drawn up or let down at pleasure; thereby keeping them from unnecessary interruption, by which means they may be made by slow degrees as familiar as a canary. They have been known to live for many years in such confinement, singing with all their natural melody; and in time they are brought to great perfection, being often heard in the metropolis and its neighbourhood singing with the same cheerfulness as others generally do when at liberty. When in full song, they are sold for very high prices; and so they ought, when we reflect on the expence and trouble required to bring them to a state of perfection. Young canaries that are brought up under them are also sold for high prices, and sought after with avidity.

THE SKY-LARK.

THIS is a very melodious bird, and ranks high in

the estimation of most individuals. They are natives of our own climate, and to be found in all parts of the country; in winter they flock together, and may be taken in great numbers, particularly when the snow lays on the ground. Birds taken at this time will sometimes turn out good song birds, although wild for a considerable time after having been caged. Some will prefer nestlings or branchers, because they are tamer and sooner reconciled to confinement; these will do very well, provided you have a good old song bird, true to its natural song, to bring them up under; if not, they will mock any song bird, and thereby destroy the greatest portion of their melody; for nothing can be more gratifying to one's ear, as we pass through the corn fields of a morning or evening, than to hear these delightful songsters warbling their loud and pleasing songs for a considerable length of time, still continuing to mount on high, until lost to the naked eye, but still heard by those who listen to their harmonious notes. Such music no doubt cheers and comforts its mate during her confinement to the nest. While her bodily warmth is producing young ones from the eggs. When they are brought to life, we seldom hear, for some time, the old cock's notes—he has other employment: the greatest portion of his time is taken up in seeking live insects for his mate and her little ones. She takes the food from his mouth, and immediately supplies the same to her young; the cock continuing his employment until they can fly out of their nest, which is generally at about fourteen or sixteen days old. When arrived to this age, he takes them out with him, in order to teach them to cater for themselves; and when they can do this, we again hear him in song, teaching his male offspring to follow his harmonious strains.

The sky-lark is very apt, when in confinement, to copy from other birds; to prevent this, they should be kept only amongst those of their own species who are perfectly correct and true to their song; they generally improve in song every year, until seven or eight years old, when they are considered to be in their prime.

In the metropolis they are generally fed on German paste, with about one third the quantity of stale bun, crumbled fine; in other parts of the country, where this paste or composition is not known, they are fed on whole grits and bruised hemp-seed, mixed with bread crumbs, bruised oats, and poppy-seed, cheese mites or mould, &c. They should have a turf of clover every other day, and plenty of clean gravel at the bottom of their cages, which should be cleaned out twice a week; a few meal worms, a few ants' eggs, and a few spiders, now and then, keep them in health, enliven their spirits, and make them sing more cheerfully. They are naturally a strong and healthy bird, and may, if their cages are well sheltered at the top, back, and sides, be kept out of doors both day and night from May to August, or beginning of September, when they will most probably go into moult. But they must be protected from draughts, winds, and rain, as they are apt to take cold, which brings on the husk. This is a very unpleasant complaint, as it frequently stops them when in full song. If their cages are properly boarded at the sides and back as well as at the top, they will do best out of doors in the fine time of the year; it makes them stronger, and they will continue longer in song.

When they are kept in rooms, it is usual to let them fly about, giving them a corner to sleep in;

they are however also kept in cages, where they sing best. Whatever form may be given to these cages, they must be at the very least twenty four inches long, sixteen wide, and twenty four high, besides the round front space for the turf; the bottom should have a sufficient sized drawer, in which enough of sharp river sand should be kept, for this bird to be able to bathe and dust itself in conveniently;—the vessels for food and drink are best outside.

Food—When wild, the food consists of insects, especially ants' eggs; also of some kinds of grass seeds; and, in autumn, of oats, which these birds skin by striking them against the ground, their beak being too weak to shell them alone. In the spring, some of the sprouting seeds and young buds, and the blades of young grass, are eaten; grains of sand helping their digestion.

Nestlings require great care and trouble in rearing, being very subject to the cramp; they should be kept in a wicker basket, covered down, to prevent them flying away. Soak two parts of stale bun, or best wheaten bread, and one part of rape-seed, in cold water, for five or six hours; then put it into a piece of clean cloth, let it simmer in water over a slow fire for about half an hour, and form it into a custard by rolling it to a complete pulp, adding to it a little yolk of a hard boiled egg; feed them with this food until they can feed themselves. This mixture must be made fresh twice a day, or it will turn sour; and if given to the birds when in this state, it will certainly kill them; a bit of raw beef may be given occasionally. As soon as they get pretty strong with their legs and wings, they must be caged off, keeping clean soft hay at the bottom of the cages, shifting it for fresh twice a week at least.

When they can feed themselves, give a little German paste, stale bun crumbled very fine, and chopped egg, mixed together; when about a month or five weeks old, cage them off, supplying them with a fresh drawer of sand, a fresh turf, and clean gravel, twice a week. You may continue the egg, &c. for a short time, and break them off it by degrees; also a bit or two of lean beef; continue this until they have moulted off.

Branchers are taken in June or July, and are as likely to turn out equally good as the nestlings, if taken before they have begun to moult; if taken in moult, they seldom turn out to be good for any thing. When in moult, give them nourishing food, and keep them in doors; a little saffron and a rusty nail occasionally in their water. When laxative, give them a little bruised chalk at the bottom of the cage; and a little mild Cheshire cheese, grated fine, with their common food; also a few meal-worms and ants' eggs, and a spider now and then.

The cocks are generally distinguished by their size and boldness, being much bolder in their carriage than the hens, and may be told by their length and strength of wing. If you feel their pinions, the cocks will appear to be thick and muscular; the reverse of it, is a hen. As to their long heel or spur, it is no criterion to decide by; the only method known is what I have above stated.

THE WOOD-LARK.

THESE charming birds are about one third less than the sky-lark, and may be taken about Michaelmas, and, if kept quiet, require but little trouble to

reconcile them to confinement, as they soon become domesticated, and will feed on the usual description of food given to soft meat birds. They have been known to sing with freedom and cheerfulness in a week after having been caught; and no bird will tempt them to deviate in the least from their natural song, which is truly melodious, no other bird having so many changes in its song as this chorister, who sings with ease and seeming pleasure to himself, as well as gratifying to his hearers. Unfortunately they generally live but a short time in confinement, not being able to cast off their plumage freely when confined in a small cage. Nature requires that this change must take place every autumn; if not, death inevitably follows: this happens yearly to ninety-nine out of a hundred wood-larks, which are kept in cages, to the no small loss and regret of their admirers. To prevent a great portion of this misfortune, I have adopted a plan as follows:—viz. to keep them in a cage the same size as that described for skylarks: and as soon as they leave off song, I turn them into a very large breeding cage, four or five together, giving them plenty of clean water to wash in, and boxes of dry sand and wood ashes to dust themselves in, keeping the cage well covered to keep them warm, but admitting sufficient light to see their food, which should be good; German paste, chopped egg, crumbs of bread, &c. also saffron in their water occasionally. This exercise and washing will tend to throw them into moult.

Wood-larks should have a few meal-worms and ants' eggs, occasionally; feed them on German paste, crumbled bread, bruised hemp seed, and poppy seed: their cages should be kept very clean, with plenty of fine clean gravel at the bottom, also

give them boxes of sand and wood-ashes now and then; being subject to vermin, this will tend to destroy them, as these birds are very fond of cleaning themselves in the ashes and clear fine sand, and are observed continually pecking the butts of their wings. For which reason they should have a clean cage about once every three months; and as soon as you have changed the cage wash the one they were in with boiling water and soft soap; when quite dry, wet the joints and crevices well with the lotion hereafter mentioned, to prevent an increase of these troublesome visitors. Do not turn the bird into it immediately it is washed, but let the lotion well soak in first for a day or two, and let it be dry, and the scent gone off.

Their cages must be furnished with perches, and also with turfs of grass, because, though Wood-larks perch, a turf, nevertheless, is essential to their health.

THE TIT-LARK.

THESE birds arrive in this country about the same time as the nightingale, and, like them, the male arrives some few days before the female. They are considered to have emigrated from some warm climate, frequenting, on their first arrival, those pastures on which sheep are kept, and no doubt nestling themselves in their warm clothing; for, when taken, sheep-ticks are often found sticking to them, more particularly about their heads. These vermin often fasten themselves so firmly on the birds, that it is with difficulty they can be taken off, and are frequently so buried in their flesh, that it becomes necessary to take them off by force. They

should be taken immediately on their first arrival, and have their wings tied, as stated in the directions respecting the nightingale. If taken early in the spring, they are more likely to answer your purpose, both as regards the probability of being a cock, as well as being more likely to feed on the usual food given to soft meat birds.

These birds, although so extremely soft and melodious, singing with a degree of ease but seldom observed in other birds, are but little esteemed, except in London, or in Germany, where they are much looked up to as teachers, with the nightingale, of their young canaries: they are very deliberate in their song, and it consists in what is termed, in fancy, the beauty of song, either in their own or in that of the canary. These birds, like every other kind, have their different qualities of song, some of them singing much better than others; they begin, "sweet, sweet, sweet, sweet, sweet, chaw, chaw, chaw, fare, fare, fare," &c. The nightingale learns the canary to rattle, what is commonly called, the sweet jug and water bubble.

The tit-lark lives on the same sort of food as wood-larks, and must be broken off live food by slow degrees: when first caught, their wings having been tied together, put them into a breeding cage four or five together; in a saucer put a quantity of ants, and meal worms, gentles, or brandling worms, which may be got at any fishing-tackle shop; strew over them some chopped egg, crumbled bread, bruised hempseed, poppy-seed, and German paste, placing the cage fronting a window, which should be covered over with a silk handkerchief or some other light substance, leaving a sufficient light for them to see their food. If kept quiet, and this food given them

for two or three days, most likely they will be brought to eat the soft victuals, without being decoyed to do so with the live bait. Do not leave off the live food too hastily, for fear of their pining after it; but do so by degrees, until you find them eat their other food without any other temptation, but give them occasionally a few small meal worms and other live food. These birds, like the wood-lark, seldom moult off in confinement; and the only remedy I know of is to keep them in large cages, and at the proper season of moulting, treat them in the same manner as laid down for that bird. In case you keep both of these birds, turn them into the breeding cage together; what is good for one is good for the other. I know of no method of distinguishing the gender of these birds, but by their song.

The tit-lark does not dust itself, and roll in sand, like the two others, but it is good to give them plenty of gravel, and occasionally some wood ashes, at the bottom of their cages; they must have daily a saucer of clean water, into which they are fond of thrusting their beaks, and sprinkling themselves; and it is necessary also to let them have clean cages, like the wood-lark, once every three months.

ROBINS.

THESE little warblers are well known to every one; and every child, in its infancy, is taught to respect and not injure this tame and melodious songster; it would seem, indeed, from their affability and domestic habits, as if nature had ordained that they should fly to mankind for shelter and protection. It is but seldom that they are observed

at any considerable distance from the residence of some human being, frequenting the noble mansion as well as the humble cottage, the inmates of which, particularly the younger branches, generally save the crumbs which fall on the table for their favourite little melodist, whose visits are welcomed by a daily repast, and who, in return for such kindness, perches himself on the window-ledge, or at some short distance, and sings his song of thanks. So familiar, in fact, does he at length become, that, in the depth of winter, he will frequently intrude himself, if an opportunity offers, and peck such things as may have fallen from the table. It would be unnatural in man, if their musical strains did not, at such times, bring forth some food from the hands of the kind and humane, since they are unable of themselves to procure a sufficiency to supply the calls of hunger, the frost and snow covering the ground, and preventing them finding live insects.

From their naturally tame disposition they soon become quite reconciled to a wiry prison, and will, if properly attended to, live for years in such confinement, singing with all their wonted cheerfulness, and requiring but little trouble when in health. They should be fed on the same food as given to wood-larks; and to keep them from being ill, give them a few living insects, such as small meal worms, ants, earwigs, wood-lice, spiders, &c. Any of these, a few at a time, will be beneficial; as well as a little of the mites or mold of cheese in their German paste, a little bruised hemp-seed, and a few bits of raw beef occasionally: in their water put a little hay-saffron, once or twice a week, or a rusty nail. The nestling birds are best if you have good old birds to bring them up under; if not, those taken in June or July

will prove equally good, and be less trouble to rear. The cocks are distinguished by the bright red under the breast, as well as that on the head, extending itself more than in hens; and they are larger in size.

WRENS.

THE wren is considered the smallest bird found in this kingdom; their little song is sweet and soft. They frequent out-houses, and generally make their nests in the thatch of cow sheds, which they form completely round, leaving a hole, for ingress and egress, about the size of their own body. They lay a great number of eggs, oftentimes to the number of fourteen. They are pretty little things, but not at all worth the trouble and expense of keeping, and therefore no reason can be urged for their being placed in a state of confinement. They will feed on the same food as robins.

BLACK-CAPS.

THE black-cap may most assuredly be classed amongst our songsters; it is a pretty looking bird, but seldom or ever found domesticated. In some counties, particularly in Norfolk, it is called the mock nightingale. It feeds on living insects; and although their song is melodious when in a state of freedom, I doubt much if it be worth while to domesticate them; however, if it is done, they must be fed on the same food and treated in the same way as directed for nightingales.

RED-STARTS.

THE red-start is a pretty song bird, although

short in its notes; still he continues to warble forth his music in quick succession, and, if taken when young, may be brought up under the wood or titlark, and will then answer its keep. They require the same food as nightingales.

BLACKBIRDS.

THESE birds are well known in all parts of the kingdom, and are found domesticated in every town and village. They should be taken when about fourteen days old; their cages should be covered at the bottom with soft hay, or a turf, changed twice or thrice a week, so as to keep them clean. Feed them, when young, on lean meat chopped quite fine, mixing it with soft bread which has been sopped in water, or with oatmeal formed into a stiff paste with cold water. When they can feed themselves, they will eat almost any kind of soft food. Some persons give them raw meat and cheese curd, oatmeal and water, bread and cheese, snails, worms, apple, and a variety of other food, according to their fancy, or from being enabled to procure such things without much trouble or expense. Their natural song or whistle is soft and melodious; but, being a mock bird, they often lose this qualification, by imitating those birds which may be in their hearing. Being of a laxative habit, they make much dirt about a house. I always keep them on German paste, with a few bits of lean meat, and meal worms occasionally, finding this food agree with them very well, and preventing much smell and dirt. I have known them whistle different tunes very correctly; they continue in song only a few months in the year; and from their size and other considerations, they are better calculated

for out of doors than for the interior of dwelling houses. The cocks are generally distinguished by their blackness, the hens being much browner. When twelve months old, the cock's beak becomes quite yellow.

THE THRUSH, OR MAVIS.

THIS is a very loud-songed bird, and sings throughout the greatest part of the year: being very similar in their habits and disposition, they may be managed in the same manner as the black-bird. From their loud and powerful notes, it is more pleasing to hear them at a distance; and they are therefore better calculated for pleasure grounds, than for the interior of a dwelling house.

It is almost impossible to be certain which are cocks by their plumage; the best and only true criterion to judge by is, if not sufficiently old to record their song, their size and boldness; their eyes are in general more piercing.

THE STARLING.

THESE birds are seen during the winter season in immense flocks, completely darkening the air with their numbers. I have known a vast number to have been shot at one discharge from a fowling piece. Their plumage is extremely beautiful, particularly that of the cock bird; and they may be taught to articulate sounds so as to resemble the human voice. They ought to be taken when very young, say twelve or fourteen days old; keep them in darkness, and instruct them at every meal in the lessons you wish

them to repeat, not beginning with any fresh words until they have repeated their first lesson fluently. It is a piece of useless cruelty to slit their tongues; for although it is attempted to improve their volubility, it has not the desired effect, and they will, if properly tutored, talk much better without this operation. Feed them as you would blackbirds, When able to feed themselves, still keep them covered over, and continue their lessons of instructions every hour, or at every opportunity; the oftener the better. When in moult keep them warm, and administer such things as laid down in moulting off most other birds. Give them a few meal-worms.

The cock is distinguished by a thick line under its tongue, the hen has little or none.

THE JAY.

THIS bird possesses much cunning, and may be taught to pronounce various sentences, so as to resemble the human voice. Many are found to talk equal to the parrot, and are as beautiful in plumage; their feathers resembling the rich colouring of the parrot about the head and wings, and the feathers on the cap of the head are raised at pleasure.

It is but seldom they are seen, not being a very common bird; still they are found in small numbers throughout most counties. These, like all other birds intended to be taught any thing out of their usual or natural course, should be taken when young. Instruct them in the same manner, and feed them on the same food as any other soft meat bird; viz. German paste, raw beef, &c.

THE MAGPIE.

THIS is a very mischievous and very common bird, feeding on carrion, or when driven to extreme hunger, preying on small birds. Their colour consists of nearly equal parts of black and white, therefore termed pied. This bird may be taught to talk and speak very fluently: teach them as you would a jay or starling, and give them the same food. The wings of the cock are much brighter in colour, both as regards the black and blue, and the richness throughout the whole of the plumage.

THE REDPOLE.

THIS little bird, which by some is called the French linnet, is easily known by the red head and breast; but his little chattering song has no great deal of melody to recommend him to the notice of bird-fanciers, who generally pronounce him scarce worth the trouble of keeping. The food that is recommended for linnets or chaffinches suits the redpole, and he is a hardy bird, so that there is no danger of losing him through the want of delicate treatment. The redpole is one of those birds that migrate from the north at the approach of our winter, and return to it in the spring, that season being in our climate too warm for them. In the north of Scotland they are more common, but as they possess merely a chattering note, they can hardly be classed among the birds of song.

JAVA SPARROWS.

THESE birds are brought from the island of Java.

in the East Indies, and may often be seen in the metropolis; they are a pretty bird enough, and resemble in size and make the bullfinch. They are of a black, grey, and pink colour, but not of any musical powers; they are kept merely to look at, not having so much claim to musical strains as our own country house or hedge sparrow. They should be kept on canary and flax-seed; a small quantity of rape and hemp may be given occasionally; if too much hemp-seed is given, particularly at the time of their moult, it tends materially to destroy the richness of their plumage, thereby taking away the whole of their beauty.

When in moult keep them warm, and administer such things as are laid down in the directions to be observed when moulting off canaries. There is no perceptible difference, either in shape or size, between the cock and hen.

HAVING, in my opinion, stated the whole species of song birds found or known in this country, with the best plans for their management; I shall now draw my readers' attention to those things best calculated to keep them in health, and also, in case of need, to cure them when in sickness. Before I enter into remedies, I shall give my readers a recipe, for making a composition, which is nourishing for all birds, more particularly for that class distinguished by being called soft meat birds. The whole of these will live on the paste, if mixed with about one-third of crumbled bread crumbs, bun, or sponge

cake, occasionally cheering up their spirits with a few of their natural insects, &c.

GERMAN PASTE.

TAKE one pint of pea-flour, in which rub up a new laid egg; then add two ounces of fresh lard, and three ounces of honey or treacle; continue to rub this well, so as to prevent its being in large lumps; when got to a fine powder, put it into a clean earthen pipkin, and place it over a slow and clear fire, until warm through, stirring it all the while, to prevent its burning; when sufficiently hot, take it off, and pass it through a fine wire sieve; then add about two ounces of maw-seed, and if hemp-seed is thought essential, give the small Russia whole, in preference to the common sort, bruised, as it only tends to bring on the husk or dry cough. They will eat it whole, and it will do them equal good, and prevent nasty and troublesome complaints, which oftentimes stop the birds, when in full song, until they bring up the small particles of the hulls of the usual sized hemp seed.

MOULTING.

THIS sickness is what all the feathered tribe is liable to, during which time (about three months,) they undergo much pain; they require, therefore, care and nourishing food, as well as being kept warm, and out of any draught of wind. Cold brings on swelling and inflammation in their little bowels, and frequently will, if not taken in time, cause death. During the first season they only cast their down feathers, but every year after they throw off

the whole of their plumage; at least, this must be done by nature or by art, or they will be certain to die shortly. When you find them begin to moult, which may be known when their feathers are seen at the bottom of their cages, immediately put them in some warm place; or if their cages were to be covered over the top, back, and sides, with thin cloth or paper, they would moult off much faster; clean and feed them as usual. When clean moulted, take off the covering, by degrees; give them when moulting, in addition to their common food, a little chopped egg and bun, a little maw-seed, a few flakes of hay-saffron in their water, or toast and water. At other times put a rusty nail in their water; you must also sometimes put a little loam at the bottom of the cage, sometimes a little salt, unless you can get sea sand, which is better; and a piece of chalk. Continue to vary these things, as birds, like human beings, are fond of change of diet during sickness. If this plan is followed, the breeder will find its beneficial results, and the life of many a valuable bird will be saved.

After the second moulting, you will find the wing and tail feathers of your canaries become lighter every season; so that the fancy canary bird loses its fancy colours after one year old, and in five or six years, all his feathers will have become jonque or mealy coloured.

SWELLING, OR INFLAMMATION

Most frequently proceeds from a sudden change of weather, or from the birds being kept in a room which has during the day a fire, and at night, when the birds are asleep, there is no warmth; or sometimes from feeding them on unripe herbage, there-

fore always give ripe groundsel or plantain, &c. When birds appear dull and heavy, with their heads under their wings, appearing all of a heap, take them out, and see if their bellies are inflamed or swollen; if so, give some grits amongst their seed, and a little boiled bread and milk, with moist sugar, in their tin pans; next day scald a little rape-seed and bread in a bit of cloth, squeeze out the water from the bread, bruise the seed to a complete pulp, then add a little yolk of hard-boiled egg and a little maw-seed; the next day give them bread and milk and clean water, with a few flakes of hay-saffron in it; so continue this regimen, keeping them comfortably warm, until cured; which you may expect to take place in about a week or ten days. All this time take care to supply them every day with a fresh box of sharp sand or gravel, to dust themselves in, and a pan of clean luke warm water in their cages for an hour or two daily, to bathe themselves in; you must also supply them with a little lump of salt, and a piece of chalk, to peck at; as well as a few sprigs of water cress, plantain, and other ripe greens, the bird by its natural instinct, will choose that which is best for its disorder. If, however, you find them, in about a week or ten days, getting no better, and the swelling or inflammation not abated, still continue the opening food, that is the bread and milk and sugar, until the inflammation and swelling are completely gone down. A little nourishing food, and a few grains of hemp-seed, must be given, now and then, to keep up their strength.

I have known a very small quantity of magnesia to be of service; take just as much as may be laid upon a sixpence, dissolved in a wine glass of spring water, and give it to them over-night, so that they

may drink two or three times the first thing in the morning; take it away at breakfast time, and in lieu of it, give toast and water; so change for two or three mornings, and give at the same time scalded rape-seed, &c.

THE SURFEIT.

THIS disorder proceeds from keeping the birds in a dirty state, and from neglecting to keep them well supplied with good food, gravel, and water; or from sudden change of diet; either from a poor to a luxurious and richer kind of food, or from being fed on unwholesome food, such as bad seed, unripe green victuals, &c. This distemper spreads itself in small scabs, particularly about their heads; the humour issuing from them so sharp as to eat off the feathers from the whole of the head, leaving it quite naked. When this disorder is first perceived, wash the bird's head in a strong solution of common salt and spring water, and rub it quite dry with a piece of soft muslin; then rub on a little clean fat with your finger; repeat the solution and ointment every morning for a week or so; this will kill the disorder, and most probably bring on the feathers; it will kill the disorder at all events, and as for the feathers, whether they come on immediately, or not until their next moult, is only a secondary consideration;—it will be of no injury to the bird, although of unpleasant appearance.

During this disorder, they require cooling diet; give them therefore grits, boiled bread and milk, with a little sugar in it. Care must be observed not to let it stand above five or six hours, as it is apt in hot weather to turn sour, and kill the birds instead

of curing them. Give also, occasionally, some rape-seed, carrot seed, and lettuce seed; a little seeded groundsel, plantain, or chickweed, occasionally, and a little stick liquorice in thin slices in their water.

THE PIP.

ALL birds have a small projection on their rumps, from which they extract, with their bills, a kind of oily substance, essential for them to dress and keep their feathers smooth and sleek. Many a person, on seeing this natural prominency, thinks immediately the bird has got the pip; with a pin they hastily make an incision, and force out that which is of the utmost service to the birds; and through this error many a poor bird has been killed. The Pip does sometimes make its appearance, and may be known, being a large bladder of matter formed round this projection, very much inflamed, and extending with humour some considerable space round their natural projection. When this is found to be the case, give them the same cooling food as directed for egg bound, and that will, in a few days, most likely reduce the inflammation; but if it does not, you may pass a needle just through the surface of the inflamed skin, and with the same instrument gently press out the corruption; then drop a little fine pounded sugar on the place, and it will not require any further surgical operation; most probably completing a cure, without applying any thing else.

THE HUSK.

THIS disease is similar in birds to a dry cough in the human body; it oftentimes arises from currents

of cold air, and dampness, proceeding from neglect and carelessness. Persons are much in the habit of placing their birds out of doors when the sun shines, although there is no certainty of its remaining so for any length of time. In this variable clime we have often sudden and unexpected changes of weather; the poor birds, particularly canaries, whose cages but seldom afford any covering to shelter them from such sudden storms of wind and rain, are obliged to weather it out; and these birds are not at all calculated for being kept out of doors.

This disorder frequently happens to sky-larks, from cold, or from eating the husk of hemp-seed, which frequently sticks in their throat, and brings on inflammation. This seed should therefore, not be bruised, as they will eat it quite as well whole. When troubled with this complaint, give them as follows:—

Take a piece of yolk of hard boiled egg, about the size of a marble, on which drop two or three drops of clean cold water; this will immediately reduce it to a very fine paste, to which add a little loaf sugar, grated fine, and sponge biscuit; make it into a powder, and moisten it with a few drops of OIL OF SWEET ALMONDS. Give them some of this every morning in their tin pans; take also a small quantity of linseed and stick liquorice, boiled up for some time, and give them this liquor to drink; be careful, however, it is not too glutinous to prevent them doing so: let them have this for two days; then substitute clean water, in which a bit of sugar candy has been dissolved: a head or two of water-cress is also good for them. They should be kept out of any current of wind, and comfortably warm.

EGG-BOUND.

THIS complaint proceeds from cold, and is brought on too frequently from over anxiety by breeders in general, who turn their birds up to breed before the weather is sufficiently warm. It also arises from confinement; birds in cages, not having the same scope for exercise as when in a state of freedom, often suffer from this distressing malady, which is very dangerous: the poor hens get over this complaint but slowly, if at all; it frequently prevents their services for the whole season, and often kills them.

Most birds, when breeding their eggs, will appear dull and heavy, particularly as the time draws near of their laying, which they generally do, if in health, a day or two after they have finished their nest. You may know when the time of laying approaches, as the hen sleeps over night in her nest: look in the morning for an egg; if you do not find one, and she appears much swollen and heavy with egg, give her some grits, and some bread and milk boiled, and mixed with a little sugar, as directed in inflammation, page 60. At the same time, give her a little rape seed, and a very little linseed; and of greens, let her have daily a few sprigs of water cress, ripe plantain, or groundsel, and a little tuft of seedy grass, with the earth to it. If you find she does not lay her egg in a morning or two, drop one or two drops of sweet salad oil, into her mouth and vent. Some foolish persons introduce the head of a pin to break the egg, thinking it may be brought away easier: this is a mistaken idea, and a very dangerous thing, for it can be brought away much safer whole than if broken. If oil does not do, nothing but the above change of food, a lump of salt, and a

piece of chalk, for them to peck at; plenty of sand to dust themselves in, water to bathe in, and a large cage to exercise in, is at all likely to cure them.

PERSPIRATION.

THIS complaint arises from the hen's over-anxiety, or too much care, sitting on her young till the heat produces this effect, or from natural weakness. When you notice the hen sit too much on her young, not allowing time to feed herself, nor feed her young, nor suffering the cock to foster the young, you may naturally conclude it proceeds from over fondness; and it frequently happens to young hens when they have hatched their first nest of young. Take away the cock for a day or two, hanging him by the side of the breeding-cage, and supply her with plenty of ripe green victuals; this will tempt her off her young to feed herself, and when she returns to her nest, the young will gape for food, and induce her to feed them. Keep plenty of fresh plantain, groundsel, and water-cress, in a vial of water inside the cage, so as to keep it fresh; give also a saucer of cold water for them to wash in. When you find she feeds her offspring, the cock must be returned to assist in rearing them.

VERMIN.

ALL birds, and their cages, unless kept with excessive niceness and care, are more or less infested with these small insects, which cannot well be seen by the naked eye, but will be found, on looking at them through a magnifying glass, to resemble the house bug; they nestle and breed in the joints or

cracks of the cages, or in any crevices that will afford them shelter from observation.—Wherever a sort of mouldy appearance is seen round the opening of the cage door, or in the joints and corners, there they will be found in dirty cages in swarms. In the breeding season they become troublesome, frequenting the nest boxes and nests, oftentimes committing much damage both to the old as well as young birds. The only remedy for this nuisance is to keep their nest boxes, and cages clean, which should be washed clean with water and soft soap, and when dry, to wet them in the corners and joints with the following

LOTION:

Take one gill of spirits of wine, and one gill of spirits of turpentine, in which dissolve camphor and soda, of each about the size of a horse-bean, keeping it close stopped; when wanted for use, shake it well, and with a clean painter's brush wet the inside of the nest-boxes and cages, particularly jobbing and pressing the lotion into all the cracks and crevices. Do not turn the birds into such cages for two or three days; not that it will injure them, but the smell will be too powerful for them if turned in immediately.

If the birds are much infested with these insects, particularly under their wings, sprinkle carefully a pinch of Scotch snuff among their feathers. If the snuff is not found sufficiently efficacious to destroy them, make a solution of precipitate powder; thus:—put a penny-worth into a wine glass of luke warm water, mix it well, and wash the bird all over with this solution; after which wash it well over with luke warm water and white soap; be careful none of the solution gets into its MOUTH or EYES, or it may prove injurious.

BREAD AND MILK.

For birds, should be made thus;—Scald the bread, squeeze it quite dry, and mix with it as much sweet milk as will well moisten it again,—you should always give it in something that will wash clean, as if any is left, after five or six hours, it will turn sour, and injure the birds: therefore it must be made fresh and fresh, in small quantities at a time.

BAD FEET.

Clogged up and bad feet are generally caused by not keeping the cages clean; and sometimes by fixing one perch so nearly under another, as to catch what drops from the bird on the upper-one; it also is caused by not giving the birds water for an hour or two every day in which they can bathe and soften the dirt on their feet;—and also from want of a drawer or box of sharp sand in which they can scratch and dust themselves;—all these causes of course can be prevented. But if, from neglect of any of these things, their feet becomes clogged up, and bad, you must soften them carefully in luke warm water, and cleanse them gently:—If you find the feet sore, dust on the sore part a little pounded loaf sugar, and put a little soft sweet hay into the sand drawer for a day or two; and, if their feet are very sore, at the bottom of the cage also, which must be changed every day: giving them also a little change in their food.

FITS.

Sometimes birds have sudden fits, in which they will die, unless relieved. The best mode is to open

the bill, and make them take a drop or two of water, which will often recover them, but sometimes it will fail. Another mode is to plunge them suddenly into cold water, and, if they recover, put them again into their cages in a warm place. Another mode is to pull one or two feathers out of their tail. Which-ever remedy you use, it must be used quickly. One drop of spirits of nitre in their water, and an occasional change of food, with a little maw seed, and hemp seed, is all you can do for them, in the way of prevention.

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